

THE AUTHOR:

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PAINSTAKING IN AUTHORSHIP.

An idea prevails — more widely than is sometimes supposed — that, as genius is a gift and "poets are born, not made," all brain-work is a spontaneous growth and finished articles flow freely from successful writers' pens. Now, if the people who entertain such notions would but consider that they do not belong to the class of successful writers, and would never attempt to write for publication, no great harm would be done. But, on the contrary, many, having possibly original and worthy thoughts, impose upon editors material so crudely prepared that it is a pity time must be wasted in opening its envelope; and others, with just enough literary skill to perplex the conductors of their favorite periodical, delight to boast in a self-congratulatory way that they "never rewrite anything."

How far the method of the best writers differs from this mode of procedure a little re-

search will show. The greatest mind — judged by its result — has often toiled "the most terribly"; and that which appeared the happy product of inspiration becomes, as revealed, the rarely-polished work of art.

Instinctively the mind turns to the "In Memoriam" of Tennyson, and the "Faust" of Goethe. "In Memoriam," which is usually considered the best poem of its author, lay by him for seventeen years, being touched upon and added to from time to time, before it was regarded as finished and was sent out to the world; and "Faust," the most noted work of the great German poet, bears more wonderful record yet of long time spent upon a single literary production, it being sixty years from the time Goethe began it, a boy of twenty, till he had finally completed it, the man of eighty.

It may be admitted that it is altogether uncommon for authors to keep their tasks so great a length of time on hand; but there are enough cases sufficiently like these in the taking of pains and of time to prove that to achieve distinction in writing the rugged road of toil must be trod, and that for no inconsiderable distance.

Our would-be author can scarcely wait to see his name in print; but we hear of a reputable writer of to-day studying composition seven years before offering a line for publication. The historian Prescott studied six years in special preparation to make of literature a profession. And when he had then decided to write "Ferdinand and Isabella" he spent in reading and preparing for it more than three years before he began the actual writing. The book cost him ten years of hard labor. Sixteen years, then, from the time he set out to be an author his first work was published. Another

celebrated historian, Motley, likewise gave ten years to his first historical work. We know of the researches, lengthy and laborious, that it took to satisfy George Eliot before she was ready to begin some of her masterpieces of fiction; and that the author of "Paradise Lost" worked and waited for ability, "not taking thought of being late so it gives advantage to be more fit."

But does one not aspire to so great work, and so find no lesson in such examples? An editor, and writer as well, in advice to young newspaper poets of the present day tells them to keep their poems a year, and rewrite them many times before publishing. To know that Jean Ingelow often treats her verses in the same manner does not in the least detract from the apparent necessity of the humblest writer. Of an author of well-received stories lately printed it is said, "She does not write easily, having to write and rewrite everything." The bit of news even and the essay are worth nothing without an acceptable style, and the papers have given the account of how a living master of style acquired his own. It was by the study of the authors he fancied and the writing after them, and this kept up for years.

In what, after all, does excellence of composition consist but in these two things — excellence of thought and style? The knowledge that gives substance to the first has been procured, you may be sure, at the expense some time of time and trouble, and the last has not come by chance to the best writer, but is the result of patient practice and certain drill.

Beginners are naturally impatient, and are, besides, a restless people; but it is profitable to remember that the most enduring results everywhere, both in nature and in art, have been longest in the doing. This is as true — in the way of man's accomplishments — in literature, music, art, as of the pyramids of Egypt or the mounds of America's mound-building people. The musician has practised long hours every day through most of his life; the sculptor and the painter have not begrudged the years spent on one exquisite group or one great picture; the author who writes charmingly has attained this power by exceeding care and patience.

There is really no success in any other way;

and this, understood, has its appeal, for, though hurried, we are practical folk. And if we hear of songs coming in the night-time, and of fine writings dashed suddenly from off great pens, we are but to consider the years of preparation for these self-same things that have gone all uncounted.

"What is worth doing at all is worth doing well." Let any writer, ambitious or not, who would contribute to the press leave not the smallest piece of work until it is as well done as he can do it. Ghiberti worked for fifty years on the bronze gates of a Florence baptistery; when done they were declared beautiful enough to be the "gates of paradise." To some faint degree, such study of perfection may well be imitated by the novice who would grave words upon the hearts of men.

Emma E. Volentine.

NEW DOUGLAS, Ill.

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

The death of Mr. Lowell is not to-day the loss to American literature that it would have been a generation ago, for then, as we know now, there was still something left for him to do, while to-day, if we stop to think of it, there is nothing that he can be said to have left undone. His was not one of those minds which, always active, are always revealing new capacities and powers, but one of those minds which, rapidly developed within their limitations, seldom seek to enlarge those limitations, but are content to do whatever they can do naturally and easily. Primarily as a poet, he wrote from impulse, and in subjective lines, rather than from meditation and deliberation, and in the objective lines which Tennyson and Browning had disclosed to the world in their representative and dramatic studies of legend and character.

His early verse was spontaneous and diffusive, like that of Whittier; not bookish and tentative, like that of Longfellow. There were faults in it, — crudities of thought and feeling, and excesses of diction, — but they were faults which no poetaster could have committed — the flush, the bloom, the efflorescence of a rich, poetical nature, "woods of glorious feature," such as run wild in "Endymion." There could be no mistaking the quality and the value of Mr. Lowell's early poetry, for if it was not poetry, it was nothing.

But this value and this quality were altered as he went on his way, for what was poetry once became, if not quite the something which was pleasantly didactic in Longfellow, the something which was sternly moral in Whittier; he grew less a poet and more a politician. He could not resist the influence of Puritanism that dominated his time and his region, and while he never gave up to poetry what was meant for mankind, he gave up for a time the cultivation of poetry for its own sake, for the promulgation of political morality for the sake of his countrymen. His defection from poetry was a loss to poetry, while his adhesion to politics was scarcely a gain to politics; at any rate, the loss was greater than the gain, for thousands were capable of doing the public work which he now assumed as a duty, and no one was capable of doing the private task to which his genius directed him, and which, if he did not wholly abandon, he long neglected. His political verse, spirited as it is, is not to be compared with the political verse of Whittier, which, if less poetical in a literary sense, is more powerful in its vehement eloquence and indignation.

There are as many ways of looking at a poet as there are definitions of what poetry is, and is not, but the best way, one would think, certainly the first and most natural way, is to look at him as a poet, and nothing else; not as a scholar, a critic, a politician, a preacher, but a poet pure and simple, a maker of poems, a singer of songs, the business of whose life is the creation of beautiful things, the celebration of noble emotions and actions.

The true poet is this, whatever else he may be, and being this, we have no right to demand that he shall be other than this, which was the intention and is the perfection of his being. The genius of Mr. Lowell, if we comprehend it rightly, was a more purely poetical one than that of Whittier, and a more profoundly poetical one than that of Longfellow; but he has not given as much pleasure with it as they have with theirs, for even those who admire him most must admit that the number of his enjoyable and rememberable poems is much smaller than theirs.

There are great qualities in his poems, but not many great poems, only one, we think, in which he surpassed all his native contemporaries, the Commemoration Ode, which is destined to live with the great odes of the great English poets. His conception was more vivid and powerful than his execution, which was frequently marred by haste and harshness; his mind was impatient, and his

sense of harmony imperfect. He wrote largely from impulse, we judge, and in great haste, not from premeditation, and the critical judgment which he undoubtedly possessed.

He was satisfied with his first drafts, which he was averse to correcting, preferring fervor to finish. He need not have been long, and he probably was not long, in writing "The Vision of Sir Launfal," which is merely an improvisation, splendid in parts, but incomplete as a whole. No poet with whom he should be compared, not even Shelley, ever wrote so carelessly, so wilfully, and so unevenly, with so much confidence in himself and so little respect for his readers. If he had been unlettered, we could understand this and condone it. But he was not unlettered; no American poet was less so.

He was thoroughly literate, a master of his own language, and a scholar in other tongues—ancient and modern. There was no literary position which he could not have filled with honor, and no literary work which he could not have performed with distinction. His prose was admirable, lively, spirited, energetic, fluent, humorous, witty, sparkling with epigrams, and enlivened with recondite allusions. His forte was criticism, not merely of English letters, of which we all suppose we know something, but foreign literatures: French, Italian, Spanish, German, and the great literature of Greece and Rome, which is, and ought to be, the despairing admiration of generations like ours.

No English critical writing of the time, and certainly no American critical writing, is so generally intelligent and catholic, so acute and wise, so judicial and just, so liberal, so large, and so decisive as that of Mr. Lowell. We may cavil at his verse, which is not flawless, but we cannot, without hypercriticism, cavil at his prose, which, equal to any that we have produced for the interchange of opinions, is superior to all that we have produced in the shape of critical analysis, and study, and judgment.

We have lost in him a critic who had a right to be heard, he had so thoroughly fitted himself for the chair which he occupied, and to whom we were bound to listen thoughtfully, if not reverently, for he spoke as with authority, and not as do the scribes who are so numerous among us; and we have lost in him a poet of originality and distinction, who if he wrote less poetry than he might have done, and we think ought to have done, wrote enough to distinguish his name and enrich our literature. We have other men of letters of the earlier generations to lose, but none whose taking off

will affect us like that of Mr. Lowell.—*Richard Henry Stoddard, in the New York Mail and Express.*

LITERARY REMINISCENCES.

"It is not quite thirty years ago since I, a lad under nineteen, came to London to seek my fortune. I had neither friends nor money. My studies at Glasgow University had been broken off abruptly by the failure of my father, a newspaper proprietor and one of Robert Owen's band of socialists. I arrived in London one Sunday with half a crown in my pocket, wandered about friendless and homeless until, in Hyde Park, I made the acquaintance of a professional thief of the 'Dodger' species, with whom I struck up an immediate friendship and who took me home with him to a 'ken' in Shoreditch. I date my affection for thieves and improper characters from that moment, for my new friend treated me like a brother. Having no aptitude for stealing anything (except ideas from the poets), I parted from that good fellow, not without having acquired some little knowledge of the seamy side of London, and drifted to the house of an old friend of my father, where I found a temporary shelter. I speedily found work of a kind, chiefly on the *Athenæum*, then edited by Hepworth Dixon, and, thus encouraged, I removed to an attic in Stamford street, Blackfriars, where I spent a solitary but memorable year.

"In these days Bohemia still existed; all the green trees had not been lopped down. The smile of Dickens was still making the streets sunny. Thackeray was twinkling through his spectacles, and his fidus Achates, George Augustus Sala, was young, devil-may-care, and merry. Robert Brough, a genius in posse, had only just died, but a band of merry cockneys were still gamboling the magazines. John Morley, a grave youth fresh from college and of indefinite ambitions, was editing the *Literary Gazette*. 'I well remember the time,' he wrote me some years since, 'when you, a boy, came to me, a boy, in London.' He gave me books to review, and I reviewed them with all the splendid insolence of youth. Later came the starting of *Temple Bar*, and an invitation from Edmund Yates that I should become a regular contributor. He did not even ask what I could contribute, but, naming the date of the issue of the first number, asked me 'to send in my copy as soon as possible.' I had, therefore, even at that early date, acquired a certain obscure standing. Then I was asked by John Maxwell to edit the almost moribund *Welcome Guest*, and I did

so until its death; which reminds me how Miss M. E. Braddon, whose first book, 'The Secretary and Other Poems,' I had reviewed in the *Athenæum*, came to Stamford street to talk to me about her first story. She was young, interesting, and clever—a girl in a thousand.

"All the first year, however, I was solitary, dwelling in what David Gray called 'the dear old, ghastly, bankrupt garret' in Stamford street. For a short period Gray stopped with me, dying of consumption; and to us, from time to time, came Richard Monckton Milnes, afterward Lord Houghton, Laurence Oliphant, and Sidney Dobell. Through Dobell I made the acquaintance of Westland Marston, whose house I visited now and then, and of Dinah Muloch, the author of 'John Halifax.' Miss Muloch was living in a lovely little cottage at Hampstead, and the days when I went there were days of sunshine. She lent me books, gave me good advice, and told me 'I should be a great man!' Dear soul, if she could have looked forward thirty years, and realized all my follies and my sorrows! 'The pity of it, the pity of it, Iago!'

"The profession of literature is not for dreamers or for believers in the ideal; above all, it is not for any one who has any opinions of his own. A heterodox person might as well hope for happiness in the church as an opinionated person may hope for happiness in literature. To bow and scrape before bogus reputations—to give no hint that Marsyas is not Apollo—never to speak the truth, but 'to hint a fault or to hesitate dislike'—to be amiably hypocritical and studiously conventional—is the way to success in all professions—above all, in literature. Then, again, literature, with remarkable exceptions, is vilely paid. Think of poor Sarah Tytler, the authoress of 'Citoyennne Jacqueline,' and countless thoughtful works, lying now, at over sixty years of age, exhausted and without the means of support. Think of Richard Jeffreys writing his masterpieces for a hodman's wage. Think of James Thomson, neglected and scorned until after his piteous death in University hospital. If you are commonplace and acquiescent, if you are a clever tradesman, if you believe in no God but Cæsar, and accept the modern journalist as his prophet, you may live in fair comfort by your pen, and men will like you, critics will praise you—even the new journalism will respect you. If you are made of different stuff, or if you lack the power to trample down hatred, calumny, and all uncharitableness, go and earn your living by breaking stones, but beware of literature.

"After the first flush of youth and hope, there is nothing so cruel, nothing so hopeless and sad, as the literary life, as the writer's daily fight for bread. Never shall I forget how Bryan W. Proctor ('Barry Cornwall') wrote to me, before I ventured to London, and warned me against literature. 'If you pursue it what you now enjoy will become a torture; try to secure some little independence, but never take your talents into the market.' I called on the beloved old man shortly after I came to the metropolis. He sighed when he heard what I had done, and when I left him pressed into my hand an envelope containing six gold sovereigns—a little fortune. Another early correspondent, George Henry Lewes, had also written to me thus, after reading some of my earlier poems: 'Wait for three years! write as much as you please, but publish nothing. If you publish now, you will get *classed*, and the public is slow, very slow, to recognize in any one so *classed* anything but a clever writer, whatever he may have become.' These were wise words and came of a life's experience. Lewes was regarded as 'the cleverest man in England,' and nothing more, though he had become an open as well as a secret power. When the three years elapsed I went to him and informed him that I had acted on his advice and waited. He was pleased, and told the tale to George Eliot as we sat together over the luncheon-table in the Priory, North Bank.

"But since I was no longer quite friendless, I hear the reader ask, why do I describe myself as solitary? Because there was no living soul near, apart from the dying friend of my boyhood, with whom I could have any real companionship; and he, after a few terrible weeks, had left me to go home to die. Day after day, night after night, I was utterly alone. A visit to an editor's office, a stray meeting with a superior acquaintance, a hand-shake, a nod, were the only events in my life. And even then my intellectual pride—my vanity, if you please—was so colossal, my soul so full of dreams and aspirations, that all the things I met seemed ghastly and unreal.

"I don't like that young man," said a well-known publisher whom I once or twice visited. 'He talks to me as if he were God Almighty or Lord Byron.' The only creatures who appealed to me, who seemed to have anything in common with me, were night-birds and outcasts. I have walked for long hours by midnight between Stamford street and the Bridge of Sighs, almost crying for companionship. The street-walker knew me and told me of her life as we stood in the moonlight looking down upon the Thames. From the loafer and the

tavern-haunter, as from my first friend, the thief, I got help, friendliness, and comfort. But I wanted something else and I knew not what. I was full of insane visions and aspirations. Poetry possessed me like a passion. Reticent by nature, idiosyncratic, opinionated, hating to show my heart upon my sleeve, I had no one to share my sorrows or my hopes. Sometimes a vagrant Bohemian crossed my way, chirping like Autolycus, and for a time the streets seemed full of the singing of larks. Elsewhere there were pipes and beer, Mimi, loose raiment, and loose jokes. But my yearning was not for these, but for the dead poets and the dead gods. My society was composed of phantoms—the Madonna and the Magdalen, Jesus, Balder, Vishnu, Apollo, Venus, Aphrodite, Messalina, Antigone, Miranda, Rosalind, Christabel, Keats and his Dark Ladye, Heine speechless, and Milton blind. What had I in common with the cockney gospel of cakes and ale?"—Robert Buchanan, in the *London Echo*.

CLARK RUSSELL AND HIS SEA STORIES.

A most eloquent and stirring eulogy pronounced upon Clark Russell, who is himself an American-born writer, and his splendid stories of the sea is that one penned by Herman Melville, the great American sea novelist, in the dedication to his book, of which only twenty-five copies were published, "John Marr and Other Sailors."

By many "landlubbers" it is supposed that Mr. Russell never was at sea; that, like most writers of sea stories, he got his ideas from books. Sailors know better. He is the only writer who has ever interpreted the English merchant service. His pages are full of his own personal experiences. This I found out for myself in a very interesting conversation which I recently had with him at his home in Deal.

"Tell me," said I, "how you write these wonderful sea stories of yours."

"I will tell you in one word what is the secret of any power I may possess," the novelist replied. "I write only that which I know. I speak out of my own experience. I have been nearly all over the world in my time, and I know exactly what I am writing about when I describe the sea and things nautical."

"I went to sea as a midshipman in one of the old Blackwall liners at thirteen years of age. I was all through the China war, on board the old Hugomont, and it was only one day last week I was sitting here, and I saw her towed down the channel. I

knew her dear old lines as soon as I clapped eyes on her."

"But, Mr. Russell, how is it you can so vividly place all these scenes before your readers? It must be difficult to manœuvre a ship on the water, but to manœuvre a vessel on paper, to sail 'a painted ship on a painted ocean,' that must take some doing."

Mr. Russell smiled as he replied: "Ay, you are right. My plan is always to endeavor to place myself and my readers upon the ship's deck. Critics say there is too much sea and sky in my novels, but what would you? It is exactly as it is at sea."

"I remember," he went on, explaining to me the manner in which he always accurately described that which he saw, "that I would notice everything, and I possessed the capacity for blending. For instance," and as he spoke he pointed to a sea bird that was crying beneath us, "take that white gull floating there on tremulous wing; now, that is the object of interest. Now, I group all my effect around that bird. I would note the mirage I saw; the haze, the shimmer, the water, the uplifted vessel. I harmonize atmospheric effects with material objects, and then your untravelled critic falls foul of me for describing, perhaps, an Arctic sunrise, simply because he never happened to see the like in Regent street or Madison avenue."

"I am charged with sameness by these dreadful critics. Could anything differ more essentially in all respects than the 'Frozen Pirate' from the 'Golden Hope,' the 'Death Ship' from the 'Wreck of the Grosvenor,' 'A Sailor's Sweetheart' from the 'Lady Maud'? The 'Ocean Tragedy' and 'My Shipmate Louise' run on entirely new lines."

"In order to write about the sea a man must have gone to sea as a sailor; it is not sufficient that he dabble ankle deep in the water. A ship is a jealous thing to touch. The difficulty in writing about the sea does not consist in mere description of clouds, and waves, and sunsets; it is a far greater difficulty to sail the ship itself upon water."

"Take, for instance, a vessel which is going along under all plain sail, wind on her quarter. It comes on black to windward, with an ugly look in the run of the seas. Now comes the question of shortening canvas. What sail will a landsman, who, as dear old Herman Melville would put it, knows the sea only from a beach-combing point of view, take in? How would he begin? What sheet, what halliards will he first start?"

This was a poser for me; Mr. Clark Russell grinned sardonically as he waited for a reply. I pictured myself at sea, as I had often been. I

waited a moment and then I said: "I would begin by hauling down flying jib and clewing up main royal."

"But that would be quite wrong," smilingly replied Mr. Russell, "while your fore and mizzen royals were still aboard," whereat his youngest son, a jolly lad of fourteen and a true chip of the old block, burst into a scornful laugh that made the rafters ring again, at the thought of the horrid mess in which I, poor critic and journalist, would precipitate myself were I placed in such perplexing circumstances."

"How came you, Mr. Russell," I asked when the boy's ringing laugh had died away—"how came you, a practical sailor, to take to novel-writing?"

"Well, the taste for writing first came to me in a very curious manner at sea. We were homeward bound from Sydney, and when abreast of the Horn I was washing down the decks when the batten hencoop was discovered missing. The captain told me to look for it. I could not find it, whereupon the captain grew angry. I was 'cheeky,' and so the captain ordered me below, bread and water and irons, a prisoner for the rest of the voyage. Having naught to do, I took to reading Tom Moore, and that started me to the writing of poetry."

"I didn't go to sea again. I wrote a drama, 'Fra Angelo,' in 1866, which was produced by Walter Montgomery, performed at the Haymarket, and which proved a great failure. Then Fechter, who had seen this piece of mine, asked me to translate the 'Corsican Brothers' for him. He wanted his part in blank verse, but, when it was recited to Charles Dickens, who was, you know, a first-rate actor himself, he strongly objected."

"I gave up writing tragedies—one was quite enough for me. I then wrote 'John Houldsworth, Chief Mate'; that was my first nautical novel. Then a well-known publisher asked me to write one for him, and the 'Wreck of the Grosvenor' was my response to his request. However, his reader returned it with the remark that it was merely a catalogue of ship's furniture. It was accepted by Marston."

"My friends sometimes try to tempt me ashore. 'No,' I say, 'I am web-footed, and I shall stick to the sea.' My object is to keep the standard elevated."

"Are your stories all founded on fact?" I asked.

"Well, most of them are. For instance, I once read in the papers of a mutiny at sea, in which the steward had thrown over a bottle containing an account of it. I pondered over that until I finally wrecked the 'Grosvenor.' The 'Sea Queen' was

suggested by the true story of a captain's wife who was on board a steamer, and all the crew except the captain and mate fell ill. They worked in the engine room. She steered and brought the vessel into the haven where they would be.

"This sea-novel vocation is very dear to me. It is the next best thing to being at sea itself. All the sailors I describe are men I have met in the fo'c'sle, kept watch with, gone aloft with; they are a fast dying type in this age of steamers."

At this moment a short, stout, hale, red-faced, silver-haired old man, jolly as a sandboy, entered the room. "Here I am," he cried, "At, first-class, copper-bottomed. Present me to your friend." It was Clark Russell's father, dear old Henry Russell, the celebrated composer of "Cheer, Boys, Cheer," and of those many songs which thrilled the great British public fifty years ago. What a body of romance the old man was! What a story in himself!—*Raymond Blathwayt, in the Louisville Courier-Journal.*

THE "AVERAGE READER."

The novelist who studiously concerns himself with the tastes of the average reader is either made or lost, and on certain occasions he is both. If he writes purely for popularity, he now and then attains it, but more often quite misses it; and if he writes for popularity, and attains it, he is not seldom wofully self-dissatisfied. It is a general article of faith that the novelists with plethoric pocketbooks are the happiest of their class; but much as the best of us love a fat wage for work honestly done, those of us who possess any literary ideal whatever desire emolument of a less tangible sort. I recall being once greatly astonished to hear a writer of rather cheap tales in a decidedly inferior journal say that the authors whom he chiefly enjoyed reading were Herbert Spencer and Professor Huxley. I had never found the least trace of this declared cult in his own compositions, and presently the truth came out. He was a creator who despised his own creations, notwithstanding that he reaped from them a good deal of solid pecuniary profit. His confession pointed, for my later reflections, a noteworthy moral. Perhaps it is not true that there are many neglected novelists in the world who have a happy time of it; but we might feel safe in asserting that these same wallflowers in the big garden of fiction would not be as contented as they now are if transplanted to a parterre whose associate blooms they did not consider good floral company.

The average novel-reader is, after all, a terrible tyrant. To succeed for him, in a novel, means to bite into his attention, and that psychic part of him is apt to be a very hard and repelling element. He cares nothing for the story-teller himself. Last year Jones may have woven a magic spell over him, but this year Jones' triumph is remembered only in a spirit of despotic comparison. You may in the past, for all he cares, have written masterpieces untold, what he wants you for now is what you can do for him now in the way of interest and diversion. There is your book, and there is he, ensconced beside his grate, with his slippers on, and his mind at once receptive and capriciously critical. Freshness of subject would appear at all times to be his autocratic demand; and yet somebody will venture to present him with a tale of his own time, his own town, even of his own most hackneyed personal experiences, and he will eagerly devour it, laud it among his neighbors and friends, and effect for it a commercial vogue. He is so illogical in his behavior as a reader of you that you frequently feel justified in ignoring him altogether and spinning your yarns for somebody else.

But that "somebody else" is a most shadowy personage. If a novelist does not sell with the average reader, he must content himself with a limited circulation indeed. Of course, there is always the large, though hidden, throng of intellectual appreciators, who glance at none except the "best" novels. But you and I who recount the loves of Edmund and Angelica may long have lain in our graves before anything we have wrought has been pronounced a true "classic." And considering the enormous amount of fiction that has been written, and that is being written, probably it is not far from the truth to state that deliberate aim to achieve a classic is vainglorious presumption. The most famous novelists have really achieved few.—*Edgar Fawcett, in September Lippincott's.*

THE WIFE OF "UNCLE REMUS."

In 1871 Joel Chandler Harris was the associate editor of the *Savannah Morning News*, and he lived at the hotel where Miss Essie La Rose and her mother were temporary guests. Her father was the captain of a steamboat, and his family usually accompanied him.

Mr. Harris was an unmitigated blonde, with red hair and blue eyes, exceedingly appreciative of pretty faces. Miss La Rose was a handsome brunette, with beautiful teeth and eyes to make her smiles entrancing; the shrugs of her plump

shoulders and coquettish vivacity of manner being more eloquent than both the languages her tongue could speak. The young editor had come to the *table d'hôte*, had seen two starry eyes and the dark, curly tresses of a lovely girl at her sweetest of teens. The poetic faculty in his humorous brain awoke. He sought an acquaintance with the lovely stranger—but many were the letters, and sweet and tender the poems in her praise from his brilliant pen, before the gentle heart was won. They were married April 21, 1873, and lived in Savannah until the summer of 1876, when an epidemic of yellow fever drove them to Atlanta, Ga.

Mrs. Harris was born in 1854 near Albany, N. Y., and is the ideal wife of her distinguished husband. She makes scrap-books for him of his best newspaper articles, the reviews of his books and sketches of himself from various sources. She also takes care of the many appreciative letters he receives from the most famous writers all over the world. Not long ago she took up a volume of French fairy tales and folk-lore, which she rendered into English, while her grateful husband wrote them down. But she laughingly declares that her accomplishments have dwindled down to two—the making of fine butter and getting the little ones off to bed by 8 o'clock.

Mrs. Harris then spends the evening with her husband. He writes his stories at night. While he writes she sews or reads, or does some dainty fancy work. She has the gift of "good humor," and the art of making it contagious. She is the "business manager" of the firm, as her literary lord confesses, and has been successful in that capacity. She keeps house thoroughly, and makes her home so attractive to her family that her boys find their chief pleasures at home. The house is always full of company, especially children, but any number of guests never disturb the serenity of the mistress. She is always agreeable and full of that unobtrusive sympathy so winning in a modest little woman with a musical voice.—*Annie Logan Carter, in the Ladies' Home Journal.*

THE NOVEL IN A PROFESSIONAL SENSE.

The novel tends more and more to become the only branch of professional literature; and this is unfortunate, because the novel is the branch which shelters the worst work. In other sections of pure letters, if work is not in any way good, it is cast forth and no more heard of. But a novel may be utterly silly, be condemned by every canon of taste, be ignored by the press, and yet may enjoy a mysterious success, pass

through tens of editions, and start its author on a career which may lead to opulence. It would be interesting to know what it is that attracts the masses to books of this kind. How do they hear of them in the first instance? Why does one vapid and ladylike novel speed on its way, while eleven others, apparently just like unto it, sink and disappear? How is the public appetite for this insipidity to be reconciled with the partiality of the same readers for stories by writers of real excellence? Why do those who have once pleased the public continue to please it, whatever lapses into carelessness and levity they permit themselves? I have put these questions over and over again to those whose business it is to observe and take advantage of the fluctuations of the book market, but they give no intelligible reply. If the Sphinx had asked *Œdipus* to explain the position of "Edna Lyall," he would have had to throw himself from the rock.

If the novelists, bad or good, showed in their work the influence of democracy, they would reward study. But it is difficult to perceive that they do. The good ones, from George Meredith downward, write to please themselves, in their own manner, just as do the poets, the critics, and the historians, leaving it to the crowd to take their books or let them lie. The commonplace ones write blindly, following the dictates of their ignorance and their inexperience, waiting for the chance that the capricious public may select a favorite from their ranks. Almost the only direct influence which the democracy, as at present constituted in England, seems to bring to bear on novels is the narrowing of the sphere of incident and emotion within which they may disport themselves. It would be too complicated and dangerous a question to ask here, at the end of an article, whether that restriction is a good thing or a bad one. The undeniable fact is that whenever an English novelist has risen to protest against it, the weight of the democracy has been exercised to crush him. He has been voted "not quite nice," a phrase of hideous import, as fatal to a modern writer as the inverted thumb of a Roman matron was to a gladiator. But all we want now is a very young man strong enough, sincere enough, and popular enough to insist on being listened to when he speaks of real things—and perhaps we have found him.—*Edmund Gosse, in the Contemporary Review.*

BOOK REVIEWING SYSTEMATIZED.

As an editor of an annotated bibliography recently published by the Society for Political Edu-

cation, I found it necessary last winter to ascertain which books in certain fields were important, and to add a descriptive or critical note to the principal titles. The task proved difficult, chiefly from the haphazard and inadequate way in which reviewing is now conducted. For example, so significant a work as Maine's "Popular Government" drew from its chief reviewer little more than a comparison of its style with that of "Ancient Law." A teacher of political science at a leading university some time since gave the world an ambitious treatise, conceded to be of much value, though chargeable with serious defects. The periodical of all others to which one would turn for a review has contained none. Asking the editor the reason, he said: "Oh, X is a good fellow, and we did n't like to pitch into his book." In not a few quarters it is customary for the author to suggest the reviewer's name to his publisher, so as to insure a friendly and quotable notice. In more than one widely-circulated medium it is the rule to present a book in summary, omitting the criticism, which is the essence of review. Several books of mark published two months and more before my inclusion of their titles had not been reviewed at all, except in the daily press, and that in the most superficial fashion. So unintelligent and misleading has Herbert Spencer found the press notices of his works, that in Great Britain, where he controls publication, no press criticisms are solicited. Very frequently there, as well as in this country, the reviewer of a newspaper passes upon an unduly wide variety of literature, and so provides a review of scarcely any value.

For this incompetence, irresponsibility, and—what in many cases is nearly as serious an evil—unpunctuality, we need to substitute something better:—

1. Reviews from the most competent authorities and critics in special fields—on moot questions from two or more.

2. These to compare a work with others in its department, and say wherein it is better or not so good.

3. Each review to be written in two different forms. One of the ordinary length, for simultaneous appearance in a circle of newspapers throughout America; another, condensed into a paragraph for the guidance of the reader and student, to be printed on an ordinary catalogue card and placed in libraries next the title-card.

4. The reviews to be signed.

5. To secure punctuality in a reviewer's appearance, the publisher of the book should supply advance sheets as fast as the chapters successively leave the press. The mechanical execution of an

important book usually takes time enough to enable its publication and that of its review to be simultaneous.

The advantage of this plan would be:—

1. An increase in the sense of responsibility of authorship. If a writer knew that his work was to be appraised by the man best able to do it, whose word, favorable or adverse, would largely decide the fortunes of his book, he would make it as good as ever he could.

2. An increase in the responsibility of reviewing. The puffery of interest, the glosses of friendship, the snarls of ill-nature, would tend to disappear when a critic came out over his own signature.

3. An increase of the esteem in which the public would hold reviewing, by making it a task for the competent only, with effect of aiding the success of a really good book or the neglect deserved by a faulty or bad one.

4. An increase of result in study and research through their receiving competent direction. Why should any one read a superseded manual of astronomy, a second-rate plea for protection, or a carelessly-written account of the flora of Mexico, except, perhaps, for some small incidental historical interest? And in less serious branches of literature, as fiction and the drama, the ordinary reader would receive help nearly as important as that given the student.

5. In library management it would make possible the separation of really vital books from those of merely historical value. This, especially in scientific departments, would be a good thing to do.

The plan might be carried into effect by a committee of bureau of the American Library Association. Its duties would comprise the selection from all new books of those deemed worthy of review; the engagement of the most competent critics in all provinces of literature, who must emphatically agree to be punctual; the arranging for simultaneous publication in a round of leading journals for the longer reviews; the transmission to libraries of the card reviews for the catalogue cases. The income receivable from the two last-named sources to defray expenses. Were the plan once successfully in operation, it would become possible to extend it to literature already in existence, taking the most important works first and then passing to others in due order, these reviews to be of card length only. The art of cataloguing has made striking progress in late years; to perfect it, books need to be weighed and compared, as well as merely named.—*George Hes, in the Library Journal for July.*

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WM. H. HILLS, . . . EDITOR AND PUBLISHER.

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"THE WRITER" FOR AUGUST.

THE WRITER for August has a frontispiece portrait and a sketch of Jennie M. Drinkwater, whose books are to be found in nearly every Sunday-school library, and whose "Shut in Society" has more than 2,000 members, invalids in all parts of the world. The other features of the number are articles entitled "Coöperative Literary Culture," by Roy W. Osborne; "The Editorial Department," by William H. Hills; "British Scholars on English Spelling," by Frederick A. Fernald; "To Humorists," by Mrs. George Archibald; "The Woman's Literary Union of Portland, Me.," by Ella M. Bangs; "A Writer's Protective Union," by H. Rayner; and a report of the sixth annual convention of the Western Association of Writers, by Mary E. Cardwill. The departments are full of interest, the department of "News and Notes" this month being especially complete. Every subscriber for THE AUTHOR should be a subscriber for THE WRITER as well.

PERSONAL GOSSIP ABOUT WRITERS.

Allen.—Most people will be surprised to know that E. C. Allen, of Augusta, Me., who has just died at the age of forty-two, had one of the largest publishing houses in the world. A farmer's boy, with no educational advantages, at sixteen he began his business career as an advertiser of books and novelties, publishing a small monthly for gratuitous distribution among his patrons. His little venture was so bright that it soon developed into the *People's Literary Companion*, with an immense pay circulation. He originated the scheme of giving a picture to each subscriber, and there was hardly a farmhouse in New England which did not have one

of these pictures. Then he published an original serial story, entitled "Lillian Ainsley," which took like wildfire; and before a year his magazine had the enormous circulation of a million and a half copies. Before he attained his majority he had made money enough to erect a large building in Augusta for his business. A few years later he was compelled to erect a still larger building. Some idea of the magnitude of his business may be gained from the fact that for the last twelve years he paid for postage more than \$100,000 a year, although during the same time he filled nearly all his large orders for books, albums, etc., by express. One year he sent by mail more than 1,600 tons of matter, and paid in postage \$144,000. Among the books published by him were a parallel Bible, "The Universe," "Daughters of America," and lives of Garfield, Blaine, Cleveland, and many Presidents of the United States. His fortune is estimated at nearly a million. — *New York Tribune*.

Bentzon. — To no French critic or translator, perhaps, are modern American fiction writers more indebted for French readers than to Th. Bentzon, twenty years a contributor to the *Revue des Deux Mondes*. Th. Bentzon is the pseudonym of Madame Blanc, the only daughter of the beautiful Countess d'Aure. Married at sixteen, divorced at nineteen, Madame Blanc made her literary début at thirty years, as author of "Divorce," a novel that attracted immediate attention and decided her career. Subsequently she has written twenty novels. Many have been translated into English, but so badly that she has never had the courage to read but one. "Expiation," brought out a year ago by an American publisher, and attributed to Th. Bentzon, is not her work, but that of one of her friends, a clever Parisian.

"What led you to the critical study of American authors?" I asked Madame Blanc one day, as we sat chatting in her cosy salon in rue Burgoyne.

"Irving, Hawthorne, Poe, have always been known to cultured French," said she. "As for the American writers of my own day," continued Madame Blanc, "I turn to them naturally. My attention was called in a peculiar manner to T. B. Aldrich's works in 1875. A young American journalist, Ralph Keeler, who since perished at sea, wrote me that he had read my criticism of Walt Whitman in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*."

Madame Blanc was the first to call the attention of her countrymen to Whitman's genius. "You have taken so kind an interest in our poet," wrote Keeler, "that I am tempted, on behalf of my

friend Aldrich, to ask you to read 'Marjory Daw.' I think you will like it." "It was so delicately put," said Madame Blanc, — "in behalf of my friend," — that I was much pleased, and I have always been grateful to Keeler for calling my attention to Aldrich's works."

Madame Blanc's manner of translating is no less interesting than artistic. So rigid, so conservative, is the literary standard of the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, in which her critiques appear, that the contributor of twenty-five or thirty years is as likely to be rejected as the chance aspirant. She translates but part of a work, — a page — a chapter here and there, — which frequently leads others to the translation of the whole. That which is untranslatable invites her critical comment, which is often a greater revelation to the author than to the French reader, and equally instructive.

"In American fiction," explained the critic, "the French are most interested in that which is characteristically American. Here is the secret of Bret Harte's immense popularity. He writes of a life that has no existence elsewhere, a phase that is passing away. Then the impressions of France on Americans are equally interesting. We do not care for description. The French know their country better than the foreigner. This partly explains the failure of Edgar Fawcett's stories of interest. They are too conversational. Salon gossip that lacks French polish strikes us as hard, crude."

Madame Blanc finds Cable a man of great talent. His stories have been translated. His characters appeal because they are of French blood. Henry James she regards as the only American writer who has the international sense. Howells is less an artist than James. Mr. Bellamy, she thinks, has a peculiar talent. "The Quick or the Dead" she found disgusting, and sees no great future promise in the stories of Amélie Rives Chanler. Madame Blanc's later translations have been confined to the stories of Sarah Orne Jewett, for whom she treasures the warmest admiration.

Personally Madame Blanc is a medium-sized woman, with expressive dark eyes, mobile mouth, and charming manner. Since the death of her devoted mother, several years ago, she has been absorbed in her only son, who has done much creditable scientific work, and is now on a government expedition in Asia. She works every day from early morning until noon, except on Mondays. — *Paris Letter in the New York Tribune*.

Boisgobey. — This is the fashion in which the late Fortune de Boisgobey did his work: Although

his labors began in the morning, his favorite time for composition was in the afternoon. When he had partaken of his second breakfast, or midday meal, he lighted a cigar, and, while stirring his cup of coffee, set his brain in motion to carry on the thread of imagination which he had temporarily dropped. In a few moments he sat down at his table, in a loose-fitting costume, without cuffs, and with a soft rolling collar, and wrote, with a wonderfully clear and flowing penmanship, and with a rapidity which was perfectly astounding, for a period of four or five hours; his eye becoming more and more brilliant and his whole being infused with the fever of creation. As his imagination threw out upon the paper some sad or touching incident, his tears fell and were the only blots upon his manuscript. A moment afterward he had passed from grave to gay, and laughed as heartily as he had cried at his own realistic conceptions. — *General Meredith Reid, in the Magazine of American History.*

Crawford. — F. Marion Crawford, the novelist, to-day [August 2] adds one more milestone to his life journey. It is his birthday. Few American writers have shown in their productions such learning, imagination, descriptive vigor, and such knowledge of the romantic side of human nature as Mr. Crawford. Francis Marion Crawford is a son of Thomas Crawford, the sculptor, and a nephew of Julia Ward Howe. He was born at the Baths of Lucca, Italy, August 2, 1845. While a boy he was sent to be educated in the simpler branches and to be prepared for college at St. Paul's School, Concord, N. H. He was summoned back to the old country at the age of sixteen, and after a short interval on the Continent was sent to Cambridge University, where he studied four years, showing marked ability in the dead languages. After 1874 he spent several years at Heidelberg, the Karlsruhe Polytechnicum, and the University of Rome, extending his linguistic studies further and developing a fondness for social and economic philosophy.

Mr. Crawford visited India with the intention of rounding out his knowledge of Oriental tongues, studying Indian antiquities, and gratifying a growing fondness for delving into the secrets of the early centuries of human history. The mysteries of mediæval chemistry and chemical theories exerted a wonderful fascination upon his imagination. His trip had some of the qualities of scholarly adventure. The effect of his Indian researches upon his singularly-constituted mind — a mind presenting a remarkable combination of romantic imagination and vigorous logic — can be seen in several of his

novels. While in India he was persuaded, partly from financial inducements, to undertake the editorship of an Indian newspaper newly established, published at Allahabad, at that time the capital of the Northwest Provinces. His relations with the journal were unsatisfactory. After a few concluding months he determined to revisit America, from which he had now been absent ten years.

Crawford passed the academic year of 1880-81 at Harvard, taking a special course of Sanskrit under Professor C. R. Lanman, and received a diploma from that university. During the year 1881 he contributed to several English and American reviews a series of articles treating of subjects in the realms of social, economic, and political philosophy.

After landing in America Mr. Crawford told many of his strange experiences while in the Orient to his uncle, Samuel Ward, of New York City, and the suggestion was made that he embody some of them in a work of fiction. The suggestion was carried into effect in 1882, when Crawford wrote "Mr. Isaacs" in seven weeks. The work scored an immediate hit. The author removed the same year from Boston to New York City. In 1883 he wrote and published "Dr. Claudius" and "To Leeward." In the next year he published "An American Politician" and "A Roman Singer"; in 1885, "Zoroaster"; in 1886, "A Tale of a Lonely Parish"; in 1877, "Saracinesca," "Marzio's Crucifix," and "Paul Patoff"; in 1888, "With the Immortals" and "Sant' Ilario"; and in 1889, "Greifenstein." In 1887 he contributed "A National Hymn" to the Constitutional Centennial at Philadelphia.

In 1884 Mr. Crawford removed to Sorrento, Italy, and devoted himself entirely to literature, relinquishing his passion for travel, and also some indefinite political aspirations. Since 1889, however, he has travelled in Transylvania and Turkey. — *New York Times.*

Couch. — Of his parentage A. T. Quiller Couch writes: "I am just twenty-seven years old, stand 5.11; and weigh 12.3. Was born in Cornwall of Cornish parents. (Couch is Cornish for 'red,' which accounts for the animal's name.) Family has lived, as far back as one can trace, in the few square miles between the estuaries of Fowey and Looe rivers in South Cornwall. You'll find out all about my grandfather, Jonathan Couch, in the 'Dict. of Nat. Biog.' He had sons: Richard Quiller Couch, a naturalist; see 'Dict. of Nat. Biog.' for him too; Thomas Quiller Couch (my father), incidentally mentioned in the 'Dict.' as author of a 'His-

tory of Polpero,³ the fishing town we come from. Was an antiquary, scholar, naturalist, and rather a skilful surgeon. Used to drive about the country in a queer-shaped carriage filled with books, and read all the way. Very often you'd meet the carriage first filled with halt, maimed, and blind, who had crowded him out; and the old man following on foot, zig-zagging along the road, with his nose in a book; a very sweet-natured man, with a fine ear for English. Worshipped especially Fuller, Bunyan, Latimer's Sermons, Sterne, and Carlyle, and among poets, Hood! An odd list. You may add Artemas Ward and Mark Twain, whose works would make him roar and weep with laughter, as he was driven along the country lanes, and arrived at his patient's bedside, to undergo torture in keeping a solemn face."

Many of the characteristics here noted appear in the personages of Mr. Couch's books. "The queer-shaped carriage filled with books" is not unlike the vehicle that carried the madman of Bleakirk.

The novelist of the future proceeds to talk of himself. He says:—

"My father sent me to school at Newton Abbot, Devonshire, whence I went to Clifton with a scholarship. Then with a scholarship to Trinity College, Oxford, where I got first in Moderations, second in Greats, rowed four years in the eight, and wrote verses for the *Oxford Magazine*. For one or more of these reasons they made me a Lecturer in Classics, when I took my degree; but as soon as the 'Greats' list was out I began to write 'Dead Man's Rock' and sent it to Cassell's."

Of his personal habits he adds: "My tastes are moderate, and I prefer the open air to a house. With a sheet of water, a book, a few pounds of tobacco, and a cake of Gibbs' soap I can get along. Like Cardinal Newman (whose rooms I had, by the way, at Trinity for three years, No. 7 staircase, with a famous snap-dragon growing outside on the wall)—like Cardinal Newman I love the garish day, and am only now breaking myself of doing all my work at night."—*Illustrated American*.

Darcy.—One who has been effective in popularizing the more sensational of American fiction writers among the masses of French readers is Countess Dillon, known in letters as "Marian Darcy." Countess Dillon is an English woman, the daughter of Bellingham Graham, baronet, an artist and gay man of the world of his day, and the sister of Sir Reginald Graham, well known in England. She was married to Count Dillon (not Boulanger's) in 1863 in Paris, where she has since resided. The

countess is now a widow, with one son in the French army. She is a tall, willowy woman, with a strong, refined face, kindly eyes, and the vivacity of the French. Her cosy apartments are in the avenue MacMahon. The stranger can scarcely suppress surprise when this singularly appealing, gentle woman asks in her low modulated voice, "Tell me the latest sensational American novel that has not been translated." Countess Dillon has been translating some ten years, but has not followed it seriously until within the last five years. Her translations appear as feuilletons in Paris and provincial journals. Her first great success was the translation of Katharine Green's "Leavenworth Case." It ran sixty-six days in the *Republic Française*, the *Independence Belge*, and the *Rumanian Star* of Bucharest. Equally successful was Miss Green's "Strange Disappearance," which, under the title of "Le Crime du Cinquième Avenue," ran in *Le Journal des Debats*, in which journal also appeared Sidney Lusk's stories. Bishop's "Golden Justice" and Edgar Fawcett's "Confessions of Claude" are among her later translations.

Countess Dillon works rapidly. She reads the work to be translated through once, marking striking parts, eliminating that which would not appeal to Parisians or fall flat in translation. Then she lays the original aside and begins the translation, as she would a story of her own creation. It takes her from three to four months to make a good translation of a book. Translation pays only when published as a serial. Most of the French journals pay from one to two sous a line. *Le Temps* and *Le Journal des Debats* pay from three to four sous a line. The remuneration is much higher for translation in France than in America or England. There is a greater demand for that class of work, especially of the sensational kind, and many clever women find in it agreeable and lucrative employment.—*Paris Letter in the New York Tribune*.

Fawcett.—Edgar Fawcett is devoted heart and soul to his work. Many writers, notably Julian Hawthorne, complain bitterly of the hardships of their calling; not so, Mr. Fawcett—he revels in it. He has good reason to like it, however, for he has been remarkably successful. "Fawcett is not popular among his brother authors," said a literary man of this city to me, the other day, "because he is one of the few among them who is not obliged to take a position in order to gain a livelihood." This remark surprised me, for I thought that Fawcett was popular among the writers here. If he is not universally popular, he has a goodly following

of literary men whom he can call his friends. The weekly receptions for men only, which he gives during the winter, are among the pleasantest features of the literary life here. His rooms are always filled with well-known writers, and the discussions there are sure to be bright, often brilliant, and invariably serious and profitable. Everybody talks "shop" there, but in a way that saves it from dullness. Mr. Fawcett has the art of spreading his enthusiasm among his guests. Nearly all of the younger literary men of the city find their way to his receptions and receive from him a cordial welcome. He seems never to be actuated by a feeling of jealousy for his brother writers, and often reads aloud some especially good piece of prose or poetry which he has discovered in a magazine or newspaper. Personally, he is of medium size, stout, and with an unusually large, round face, prominent, bulging eyes, and full lips, not concealed by the long semi-circular moustache, which completes a curiously interesting physiognomy. He is fluent in conversation, and gives one the impression of being, as he really is, tremendously in earnest. He is very industrious; he works on a plan similar to that pursued by Anthony Trollope, writing a certain amount of manuscript every day. Consequently his productiveness is very great. — *New York Letter in the Cambridge Tribune.*

Fothergill.—We had to announce yesterday the death at Berne, in Switzerland, at the comparatively early age of forty years, of Miss Jessie Fothergill, the well-known Lancashire novelist. Miss Fothergill was the eldest daughter of the late Mr. Thomas Fothergill, of the firm of Messrs. Fothergill & Harvey, merchants, of Manchester. On her mother's side she was related to the Brights of Rochdale, her mother's sister having been the wife of Mr. Thomas Bright (brother of Mr. John Bright), of Greenbank. She was born at her father's residence, Fernacre Terrace, Cheetham Hill Road, in 1851. She received the principal part of her education at Dusseldorf. Her first contributions of any moment were to *Temple Bar*, in which magazine most of her now well-known stories (many of Lancashire life and manners) subsequently appeared. Her first published work was "Healey," a story of Lancashire life, the main scenes of which were laid in the neighborhood of Rochdale. This was followed in 1876 by "Aldyth; or, Let the End Try the Man." In 1877 she published a local novel, in three volumes, entitled "The First Violin." In 1879 she published "Pro-

bation," a tale of the Lancashire cotton famine of 1861-'63. In 1880 appeared "The Wellfields," in three volumes; in 1881, "Kith and Kin," in three volumes; "Made or Marred" and "One of Three," in once volume each; in 1884 she published "Peril," in three volumes; in 1886, "Borderland," in three volumes; in 1888, "From Moss Isles," in three volumes, and "Lasses of Laverhouse," in one volume. We believe the last work she published was during the last year, when her novel "March in the Ranks" appeared. Many of Miss Fothergill's works, especially her stories of Lancashire life, are very charming reading. Some, such as "Healey," "First Violin," "Probation," and "Lasses of Laverhouse," have been and continue to be very popular. — *Pall Mall Gazette.*

Holmes.—I was down at Beverly Farms on business yesterday [August 12], and paid my respects to Dr. Holmes, who is occupying his cottage there as usual this summer. His home sets back in the field quite a distance from the street, and is perched partly on some huge boulders which drop down in successive giant steps from the hill above. It has taken considerable labor to smooth out nature's wrinkles in the landscape about the house and arrange the pretty garden in front, but it looked yesterday as fresh, sweet, and well groomed as the genial Autocrat himself, who is by no means a vacation idler these warm August days. He was at work on some manuscript when I was shown in by the trim doorman, and has not aged perceptibly in the past two or three years. His eyesight troubles him considerably, and I noticed his pigeon-holed desk was labelled "Scissors," "Eraser," "Pencils," etc., in its several compartments, though perhaps this was done simply to facilitate his work rather than as an assistance to his eyesight, which cannot catch stray objects a little way removed from his vision. Dr. Holmes is in his usual health this summer, and, though greatly overcome by the death of Mr. Lowell, chatted agreeably with me for a little while. — *Boston Record.*

Verne.—Jules Verne published his first novel when he was thirty-five years old. Since then he has written an average of two books a year, and is now the author of sixty volumes of more or less fascinating interest. Writing a book with Verne is a work of prodigious toil. Before putting a single line on paper he mentally prepares all his material, makes his maps, lays out his routes, and reflects upon his work for months. Then when

the story has been written he corrects it at least ten times before giving the final proofs to the printer. — *Baltimore Herald*.

LITERARY NEWS AND NOTES.

James Russell Lowell died at Elmwood, Cambridge, early Wednesday morning, August 12. Funeral services were held August 14 in Appleton Chapel, Harvard College, the ceremony being conducted by Bishop-elect Phillips Brooks and Rev. William Lawrence. The honorary pall-bearers were President C. W. Eliot, Hon. George William Curtis, Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes, W. D. Howells, Christopher P. Cranch, Professor Charles Eliot Norton, Professor F. J. Child, C. F. Choate, John Holmes, and Professor John Bartlett. The mourners were in three carriages, the first two containing Mr. and Mrs. Edward Burnett, the son-in-law and the daughter of the poet, with their children and nurse, while in the last carriage were the sorrowing domestics of the family, many of whom had been at Elmwood the greater part of their lives. The burial was at Mt. Auburn.

The *Pall Mall Gazette* remarks that it is "not likely that many books of importance will be published before October," and that meanwhile English publishers and American printers are busy in preparing books for simultaneous issue in both countries.

The thousandth number of the *London Academy* was issued recently. To the first number of this periodical, which was founded in 1869, John Murray contributed the first authentic account of the burning of Lord Byron's memoirs.

Two years ago the name of Rudyard Kipling was known only to a select coterie of discerning readers. Now his fame has penetrated wherever the English language is spoken, and his collected works fill eight stout volumes.

Lady Duffus Hardy, whose death was recently announced, was a prolific novelist, her works including "The Artist's Family," "A Casual Acquaintance," "A Hero's Work," "Paul Wynter's Sacrifice," etc. After the death of her husband, in June, 1878, she resolved to travel, and came to America. The record of her various journeyings is given in "Through Cities," and "Prairie Lands," and "Down South." She also wrote "War Notes from the Crimea." She recently spent two winters in Florida. She leaves behind her a daughter, Miss Iza Duffus Hardy, who has also acquired some distinction as a novelist.

Dr. Edward Eggleston, the novelist, is to be married this month to Miss Anna Goode, of Madison, Ind.

The J. B. Lippincott Company has in press and will publish in the early fall "A Supplement to Allibone's Critical Dictionary of English Literature and British and American Authors" by John Foster Kirk. The work contains over 37,000 authors and enumerates 93,000 titles, will be published in two large volumes, and comprises 1,600 pages.

Sir Edwin Arnold has signed a contract to deliver fifty lectures in America. He will begin in New York November 1.

Frank A. Munsey announces the change of *Munsey's Weekly* to a monthly publication, under the name of *Munsey's Magazine*.

Ella Wheeler Wilcox is working on "My Memoirs," and W. G. Eggleston on "Ingersoll as a Critic."

The poet Swinburne is spending the summer in a house in Cheltenham, which was originally built for and occupied by Sir Walter Raleigh. Mr. Swinburne, however, has no love for Sir Walter's memory, but abuses him roundly as the introducer of tobacco.

James Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd, wrote once to a friend, saying: "I never offered a piece that has been returned to any other periodical," which is not an encouraging example for young writers. Some of the best literature of the world — "Jane Eyre," for example — would have died still-born under such a rule.

One of the most interesting features of the August number of the *Inland Printer* (Chicago) is an illustrated article devoted to "Art in Newspaper Illustrating," for which the different artists connected with the Chicago daily newspapers have contributed sketches.

M. F. Sweetser and family have sailed for Europe for a three-months' outing. Mr. Sweetser has applied himself to his literary work the past twenty years, having written about sixty books — historical, biographical, travels, hand-books, etc.

Mr. Gladstone, in the face of protest, clings to his belief that the sum paid to Milton for "Paradise Lost" was the first regular payment for literary work. "In the sixteenth century," he concedes, "there were authors in the pay of booksellers. Milton, however, was no journeyman. He sold a property; and I have not yet obtained notice of any earlier case in which a literary work was made the subject of sale and purchase."

Mrs. Frances Hodgson Burnett is suffering from overwork. She has taken up her residence in a country house in Yorkshire with Miss Hall, a young American singer.

Austin Dobson, the poet, is likely to visit the United States next autumn and give a series of readings from his own works.

David Christie Murray, the novelist, has lately returned to England, after a two-years' sojourn in Australia and New Zealand, laden with manuscripts in the shape of a three-volume novel and materials for a serious work on Australia, which will soon be given to the world in the *Contemporary Review*, and a play entitled "Charms," which, played successfully in the provinces abroad, he is about to produce in the provinces at home.

The task of editing and arranging Victor Hugo's manuscripts is nearly completed. More than three thousand pages have been disposed of. The concluding volume, called "Ocean," is now in the hands of the printers; but the correspondence, dating from 1820, remains to be edited. It is probable that a representative collection of letters will be brought out before long.

A portrait of Charles Dickens has just been set up in the town hall at Portsmouth, Eng. This is the only memorial of the novelist in his birthplace.

Colonel John Hay, of Washington, D. C., has taken possession of his summer residence at the Fells, Sunapee Lake, N. H.

Thirty-two years after the death of G. P. R. James, the novelist, that of his widow, Mrs. Frances James, is announced in Wisconsin.

Miss Lisette Woodworth Reese, of Baltimore, has been visiting Boston. Her new volume of poems, "A Handful of Lavender," will soon appear from the Riverside press.

Macmillan will begin to publish in the autumn a series of copyright novels by English and American writers to be sold at the uniform price of one dollar. The series will include Mrs. Humphrey Ward's new story, "David"; Mr. Crawford's "Witch of Prague"; Mr. Shorthouse's new novel, "Blanche, Lady Falaise"; and the latest collection of Kipling's stories. The fact that the authors announced as contributing to this dollar series have heretofore published their books in this country at higher prices than that advertised in this case, seems to argue that there is little danger that the recent legislation granting copyright to English authors will have a tendency to make prices higher for books issued under the copyright act.

Mr. and Mrs. George Parsons Lathrop are summing at New London, Conn.

Miss Kate Sanborn, in her book, "Adopting an Abandoned Farm," gives this pleasant glimpse of Whittier in his Danvers home: "I found he had three dogs. Roger Williams, a fine Newfoundland, stood on the piazza with the questioning, patronizing air of a dignified host; a bright-faced Scotch terrier, Charles Dickens, peered at us from the window, as if glad of a little excitement; while Carl, the graceful greyhound, was indolently coiled up on a shawl and took little notice of us. Whittier has also a pet cow, favorite and favored, which puts up her handsome head for an expected caress. The kindly-hearted old poet, so full of tenderness for all created things, told me that years when nuts were scarce he would put beech nuts and acorns here and there, as he walked over his farm, to cheer the squirrels by an unexpected find."

Walt Whitman, "the good, gray poet," was tendered a dinner at his home in Camden by a number of his friends in honor of his seventy-second birthday. The poet presided at the feast and kept up a running conversation, in the course of which he said many interesting things. Letters of greeting and congratulation were read from Lord Tennyson, James Russell Lowell, John Addington Symonds, Roden Noel, Moncure Conway, Charles A. Dana, and others. A report of this dinner, made up from the work of a stenographer and giving the text of most of the letters read, appears in the August number of *Lippincott's*.

Mona Caird's "Romance of the Moors" is the first English novel to be copyrighted in this country under the new law.

The *Library Journal* gives a few specimens of the hieroglyphics which those who hand out books to the public have to decipher occasionally: "Sequel of Saracknessa which is St. Hilario," "11thworth Case," "Aristocrat of the Breakfast Table," "Cluster on the Hearth," "Marie Bashkershirk," "Alsop's Fables," "Hy Spatia," "Dana's Emanuel of Geology," "Bonbary Roose," by Dickens; "Helen's Water Babies," "Great Orators, Their Habits and Nature When Young," "Cæsar's Contemporaries," "Tents of Ham," "Eggleston's Circus-rider," "Guyot's Earthern Man," "Lamb's Essay on Roast Mutton," "Roe's Escaped from Eden," "Butter, and Eggs, and Kisses," "Mrs. Burnett's Vera Cruz," "Trowbridge's Three Scoots," "Stock's Lady of the Lake," "Kenelworth," and "Chillingly," "Sacred Letter," by Hawthorne.